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NEWS RELEASE

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced today that a federal grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia has returned a 32-count superseding indictment against seven defendants in the case of *United States v. Royer, et al.*, on charges of conspiracy, conspiracy to levy war against the United States, conspiracy to provide material support to Al-Qaeda, conspiracy to contribute services to the Taliban, conspiracy to contribute material support to *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, supplying services to the Taliban, commencing an expedition against a friendly nation, conspiracy to possess and use firearms in connection with a crime of violence, receipt of a firearm or ammunition with cause to believe a felony will be committed therewith, false official statements, and using a firearm in connection with a crime of violence.

Arraignment is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on Monday, September 29, 2003, before the Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema.

The defendants named in the superseding indictment are Randall Todd Royer, Masoud Ahmad Khan, Ibrahim Ahmed Al-Hamdi, Seifullah Chapman, Hammad Abdur-Raheem, Caliph Basha Ibn Abdur-Raheem, and Sabri Benkhala. Royer, Khan, Al-Hamdi, and Chapman already

are in custody pending trial as a result of court proceedings that occurred following the original indictment. Donald Thomas Surratt, Khwaja Mahmoud Hasan, Yong Ki Kwon, and Mohammed Aatique, who were named in the original indictment, have since been convicted pursuant to guilty pleas.

The superseding indictment charges the defendants with seven offenses not included in the original indictment. In particular, it charges defendants Royer and Khan with conspiracy to levy war against the United States, with conspiracy to provide material support to Al-Qaeda, and with conspiracy to contribute services to the Taliban.

According to the indictment, within four days after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, a meeting occurred at Kwon's residence at which the conspirators discussed obtaining training from *Lashkar-e-Taiba* in order to engage in violent *jihad* against American troops in Afghanistan. At this meeting, the indictment alleges, Unindicted Conspirator #1 told the conspirators that American military forces likely to arrive in Afghanistan in response to the terrorist attacks would be legitimate targets of violent *jihad* in which the conspirators had a duty to engage. Unindicted Conspirator #1 also allegedly told the conspirators at this meeting that it was appropriate for them to join *Lashkar-e-Taiba* because the group was on the correct path, and that Royer could facilitate their entry into the *Lashkar-e-Taiba* in Pakistan. According to the indictment, Royer and Khan assisted members of the conspiracy in obtaining training from *Lashkar-e-Taiba* in order to enable them later to engage in violent *jihad* against the United States and its allied military personnel serving in Afghanistan. At the time Royer and Khan conspired to levy war against the United States in defense of the Taliban in Afghanistan, they allegedly did so in the knowledge that the American invasion of Afghanistan was imminent because the Taliban refused the demands of the United States to turn over Usama Bin Laden, and that, accordingly, by defending the Taliban against the American invasion, they were supporting Al-Qaeda.

The indictment also charges defendants Royer, Khan, Chapman, Al-Hamdi, and Hammad Abdur-Raheem with conspiracy to provide material support and resources to *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, and charges Benkhala with supplying services to the Taliban, to the territory of Afghanistan controlled by the Taliban, and to persons whose property and interests in property were blocked by the United States Government. Khan, Al-Hamdi, and Chapman each allegedly went to Pakistan and received training at a *Lashkar-e-Taiba* camp. Chapman and Benkhala are also

charged with making false statements to law enforcement agents.

United States Attorney Paul J. McNulty stated: “This superseding indictment reveals the true and underlying purpose of the conspiracy, and demonstrates our continuing commitment and resolve to bring all of the conspirators to justice.”

“Christopher A. Wray, Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice, stated, “Today’s new charges demonstrate that we will pursue cases until all of the facts are uncovered. As alleged in the superseding indictment, we will vigorously prosecute anyone who plans to fight against Americans and to provide support to our terrorist enemies.”

This case is being investigated by agents of the Washington Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant United States Attorneys Gordon D. Kromberg and David H. Laufman, and John T. Gibbs of the Criminal Division’s Counterterrorism Section are prosecuting the case for the United States.

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